

[18 August, 2000]

RAJYA SABHA

(c) the total amount estimated to be spent for implementation of the programme; and

(d) by when this programme is decided to be undertaken in this country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Government have formulated National Forestry Action Programme-India, a perspective plan for sustainable development for forests in the country for the next 20 years and to bring 33% of the total geographical area of the country under forest/tree cover as stipulated in the National Forest Policy, 1988. It envisages rehabilitation of 31 million ha. of degraded forests and extension of forest/tree cover on 29 million ha. of non-forest lands at an annual rate of afforestation/regeneration of 3 million ha. It is estimated that an amount of Rs. 1339027.8 million would be required over a period of next twenty year to implement the National Forestry Action Programme. Implementation of the Programme has started from the current financial year within the available budgetary support.

Ban on Plastic Bags in Residential Societies

2826. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether environment is a common concern and people's participation and awareness is spreading fast;

(b) whether Government are considering to impose a complete ban on plastic bags in all residential societies and the success of the campaign has resulted in an upsurge in the demand of jute bags in the capital;

(c) whether several States like Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab and Goa have sought blue print of the formula to reinvigorate the similar campaign; and

(d) if so, what are Government's plans to make the campaign of banning plastic bags throughout the country a success?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) Yes, Sir. The Ministry of Environment and Forests have been organising the National Environment Awareness Campaign since 1986 for creating environmental awareness at all

levels of society. Financial assistance is provided to NGO's educational and research institutions, women and youth organisations and army units for generating awareness among people. Each year, themes are chosen around which the campaign is focused. During 1999-2000, a total of 4,040 organisations were provided financial assistance under the scheme.

(b) At the moment, there is no proposal before the Central Government to impose a complete ban on plastic bags. However, the Ministry of Environment and Forests have brought out the Recycled Plastics Manufacture and Usage Rules, 1999. These rules prohibit the use of carrybags and containers made of recycled plastics for storing, carrying, dispensing or packaging of ready-to-eat foodstuffs. In order to encourage recycling of plastics and discourage its littering, the Rules specify that minimum thickness of carrybags made of virgin or recycled plastics shall be 20 microns. The Government of Delhi have launched a sustained campaign on "Say No to plastic bags Yes to jute, cloth and paper bags". Through the campaign, the consumers are informed about the places where jute bags are available in the capital.

(c) and (d) Information from the States is being collected.

Allocations to Bihar Pollution Control Board

†2827. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Pollution Control Board provides financial assistance to State pollution control boards for prevention of pollution;

(b) if so, the amount provided to Bihar State Pollution Control Board during the last five years; and

(c) what have been the achievements of the Central Pollution Control Board in environment's protection during these five years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Central Pollution Control Board has provided about Rs. 40 lakhs to Bihar State Pollution Control Board during the last five years.

(c) the achievements of the Central Pollution Control Board during the last five years include the following:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.